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SECURITY INFORMATION

30 June 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH: Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT: Proposal to Send United States Government
Foodstuffs to East Germany

Reference:

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1. It is recommended that the Psychological Strategy Board give early consideration to a German Mission proposal to exploit psychologically the existing acute food shortage in the Soviet Zone of Germany. The German Mission has proposed that the U. S. Government address a letter to the Soviet High Commissioner for Germany, offering to make American foodstuffs available to the Soviet Zone population through a recognized international organization to alleviate human suffering.

2. The value of the proposal is that the Soviets, whatever their reply, would be placed at a psychological disadvantage. Soviet refusal to accept food would highlight the contradiction between Soviet peaceful pretensions and Soviet actions and would increase Soviet Zone resentment and anti-Communist solidarity following the East German riots. Soviet agreement would afford the Soviet Zone population its first concrete evidence of Western willingness to assist them, and the food alone would have an excellent propaganda impact.

3. It may be noted that a U. S. offer of food would reinforce a resolution recently passed by the Federal Republic Government authorizing the transfer to East Germany of \$11,000,000 worth of scarce foodstuffs. The Federal Republic resolution may have been induced by a public proposal along the same lines previously made

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4. The German Mission suggests that the U. S. Government request permission for the U. S. and other interested nations to sell the offered food at reasonable prices in East Germany. The U. S. offer should make clear that the program would be administered by a neutral international organization such as the Red Cross, and that Soviet Zone authorities might institute any control measures they desired to guard against Western propaganda or espionage exploitation.

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5. In view of existing food surpluses in the United States and the proviso that the food would be sold rather than given gratis, it should be possible to implement the program without difficulty in the event of Soviet acceptance. The transmission of a letter as suggested would furnish an official indication of our interest in the plight of the East Germans and would show our recognition of the recent East German heroism in resisting Soviet encroachment.

6. The German Mission proposal has been discussed with and informally strongly endorsed by the State Department Bureau of German Affairs.


for JOHN A. BROSS
Chief, Eastern European Division

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: Officer designations should be used in the "TO" column. Under each comment a line should be drawn across sheet and each comment numbered to correspond with the number in the "TO" column. Each officer should initial (check mark insufficient) before further routing. This Routing and Record Sheet should be returned to Registry.

FROM:

EE/PP/G

NO.

DATE

30 June 1953

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